

THE

HOMŒOPATHIC PETITION

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EXAMINED:

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FALLACIES OF THE FACULTY EXPOSED:

IN

A Letter

TO THE VERY REVEREND THE PRINCIPAL OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF EDINBURGH.

BY

ASCRIPTOR.

EDINBURGH:

JAMES HOGG, 4 NICOLSON STREET.

LONDON:

R. GROOMBRIDGE & SONS, PATERNOSTER ROW.

MDCCCLII.



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LETTER, &c.

REVEREND SIR,

I have to request your attention for a few moments to a Petition recently presented to the Patrons of the University on the "remission" of a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Medicine by the Medical Examiners, on the avowed ground that he professed the intention of pursuing his medical studies beyond the limits within which they are contended to move; and the overpassing of which they have thus proclaimed to be, in their view, an insuperable barrier to University honours. It is quite true that this was not the sole professed ground of Mr Pope's rejection; but that I am doing the Faculty of Medicine no injustice, will be quite apparent when I quote their solemn deliverance on the case. It is only necessary to premise that, in the preceding examination, Mr Pope had stated, in reply to a direct question on the point—"I am not now a Homœopathist; but, after graduation, I mean to inquire into the truth of it." The Faculty unanimously resolved—"That serious doubts are entertained as to the soundness of Mr Pope's principles of practice; and that, on this account, as well as his insufficiency on some subjects of examination, he shall be remitted until the end of July, by which time he will have had ample opportunity of making the inquiry into the truth of Homœopathy which he says he contemplates."

By the suggestion of the Petitioners, the Patrons have brought

this matter under the notice of the *Senatus*, by transmitting to them the Petition, which is now in your hands. For my own part, as one of those who signed the Petition, I should have been quite satisfied here to let the matter rest for the present, had I not happened to see an article which was published the other day in the "Monthly Journal of Medical Science" (February, 1852), containing statements with reference to the character and objects of the Petitioners so inconsistent with what I know to be the truth, and so calumnious and insolent, as to provoke an explicit contradiction and exposure. Indeed, intrinsically, I should have deemed such an attack quite unworthy of notice; and, had it not appeared in a quarter calculated to obtain for it some weight, at least within the University, I should have done nothing that could in the least increase its importance, or delay its early burial. But the fact is, that this discreditable paper has the sanction of *four* members of the Faculty of Medicine, whose names appear on the title-page of the Journal; and one of whom I presume is its author. At least, the Petition being in the hands of the *Senatus*, it could only be through the agency of one or more of the members that the writer got the possession of it, which he has turned to so bad a use. I am quite aware that anything so intemperate as it will appear to be cannot for a moment have your approval, or the approval of any member of the *Senatus*, not being one of the Faculty of Medicine; and I am also convinced that its apparent *animosity* will go far to diminish its effect; still, as the members of the *Senatus* will hardly believe that from such a quarter can issue statements so utterly groundless and calumnious as these will presently appear to be, there might remain on their minds some vague general impression unfavourable to the Petition, which may be obviated by the few observations which I have now to make.

To those who have subscribed the Petition, it cannot but be satisfactory that even this reckless opponent could find no means of effectual attack without prefacing a false statement of the

motives and aims of the Petitioners. The very first sentence is a libel. A "Petition to the superintending body of a university, (1) *praying them to concuss the consciences of its professors* in the honest discharge of one of their most responsible duties;" (2) "one of the devices *contrived by the enemies of the University*, with a view to damage its interests;" (3) "praying that the Patrons of the University will *show countenance* to the species of quackery which has found favour with the Petitioners;" (4) "objecting to a candidate for medical honours being required *to give satisfaction that he is competent* to practise medicine with credit to the school where he was educated, according to the views entertained by his examiners and teachers;" "requiring that these examiners shall, in the discharge of the most solemn and responsible of all their public duties, *violate their consciences*," might be as monstrous as well as a "monster" petition; but it would be something very different from the document now before the *Senatus*.

In order to show that each of these accusations is not only untrue, but is the exact opposite of the truth, I have only to refer you to the words of the Petition. It begins thus: "That your Petitioners, deeply impressed with the importance of providing *adequate instruction* for those who are to become Practitioners of Medicine, and of securing that University Degrees in Medicine, which are public attestations of the *studies and acquirements* of those who receive them, shall be granted *simply on the ground of such studies and acquirements*; and feeling a deep interest in the progress of Medical Science, and *in the prosperity of the University of Edinburgh*, as one of the principal Medical Schools in Great Britain, desire earnestly and respectfully to direct your immediate attention, as Honourable Patrons, to a matter connected with the granting of Degrees in Medicine in the University of Edinburgh, which has been forced upon the notice of your Petitioners."

After quoting at full length the narrative of Mr Pope's examination, issued by the authority of the Medical Faculty, and published

in a previous number of the journal containing the article on which I have been commenting, the Petition proceeds as follows:—

“From the above statement, it appears that, in requiring from any candidate an *explicit pledge, limiting his future course of study and practice*, the Medical Faculty have made a fundamental change in the conditions under which Degrees in Medicine have been heretofore granted; and the Petitioners believe that this has been done arbitrarily, and without the authority, or even the knowledge, of the *Senatus* or of the Patrons of the University: That your Petitioners are deeply convinced that this innovation, if adhered to, will be highly injurious to the progress of Science and to the morality of the Students, as well as greatly detrimental to the *usefulness and to the reputation of the University of Edinburgh*; and that those who find themselves thus debarred from pursuing their studies in whatever direction Truth seems to call them, will be driven to other and possibly to foreign Universities, or to separate and independent institutions: That this proceeding on the part of the Examiners seems the more objectionable when they are also Professors in the University, and have ample means, as Teachers, of bringing under the notice of Students any facts or reasons which they may think important in reference to medical doctrine or practice; and that the attempt to protect and perpetuate their own particular opinions, by the imposition of such a test, argues, either doubt of the stability of their own position, or a most unworthy distrust of the judgment or integrity of the Medical Students of the University.”

After a statement to the effect that the art of Medicine is progressive and continually liable to change, and that the law of specifics announced by Hahnemann is, “in the opinion of the Petitioners, and in that of a large and influential body of her Majesty’s subjects, calculated to exercise a greatly beneficial influence on the art of healing,” the following words occur:—

“Your Petitioners, however, have *no wish to obtain from the*

Patrons the expression of any explicit preference for, or approval of, the Homœopathic system; on the contrary, the object of the present application is to secure the intervention of the Honourable Patrons of the University, should such appear to be necessary, in order that any undue attempts to interfere with the full liberty of the Students of Medicine may be prevented in future; and that the honour, independence, and distinguished reputation of the University may be preserved. In conclusion, your Petitioners have to request that the Honourable Patrons will cause the *irregularity complained of* to be brought under the immediate notice of the *Senatus* of the University, or will act otherwise in the matter as to their wisdom shall seem best."

You will think it very strange, perhaps, even with all your experience of the inveteracy of the *odium medicum*, that any professor in the University should have the temerity or the audacity to publish accusations against a large and—as we shall see presently—a most respectable and influential portion of the public, which are *absolutely refuted* by the mere quotation of the document upon which he professed to found them. That this has been done, and that with the sanction of four members of the Medical Faculty, is an unquestionable fact, proved beyond all controversy by the mere comparison of the *accusations* with the *words of the Petition printed in italics*. The writer does not pretend to have any private knowledge of the views of the Petitioners, and must consent to be judged guilty of calumnies in which malice was abundant, but prudence sadly wanting.

At the same time, I would not have you understand that I think the writer to have been aware of the utter groundlessness of these accusations. When the enraged bull-terrier breaks his chain, and flies at the carriage wheel, he takes it for an animal, and thinks to stop its progress. He is wrong on both points, and unsuccessful. So I take it the writer of this paper was much too angry to be capable of deliberate misrepresentation; and such violent assaults can but break his own teeth. Still, as the paper professes to argue the question at issue, and to contain an analytical *exposé* of the Petition,

it may be necessary for me to consider particularly a few of the facts and inferences exhibited. And, in doing this, I shall avail myself of the Letter to the Lord Provost which accompanied the Petition, and which contained an authentic statement of the views of the Petitioners, and, to some extent, an analysis of the body of signatures. This letter will be found in the Appendix.

The following is the statement of the question given in this stormy paper:—"It is plain that, if the Patrons of the University entertain the prayer of the Petition, they will have to decide whether there is to be a concussing of the consciences of one or two possible young men, or of twelve indubitable professors, who cannot evade a duty at all times disagreeable, except, indeed, by the resignation of office."

On the other hand, what the Petitioners complain of is, that, in exacting "from any candidate an explicit pledge, limiting his future course of study and practice, the Medical Faculty have made a fundamental" and unauthorised change in the conditions under which Degrees have been hitherto granted; that, in doing this, they have acted in defiance of established practice, and in gross violation of duty, the future intentions of candidates not being a usual or a legitimate subject of examination. You will observe that the accuser cannot conceive of toleration as possible, but insists that, on one side or other, there must be "a concussing of consciences;" and he seems to think that the young consciences of students are by no means to be equalled with the adult ones of professors. He argues that it is intolerant not to allow him and his fellows to persecute, by excluding from graduation all persons not of their way of thinking. If they think proper to improvise such a test, are they not to be allowed? *Certainly not.* It will be quite obvious to you, sir, that this is not a question of medical practice, on which professional men may speak with authority: it is a matter of *general government* affecting the University, like the question of the policy of imposing on all teachers a *theological* test, now under public discussion. Least of all is such an innovation to be tolerated without the express authority

of the *Senatus* of the University. An *innovation* I confidently assert it to be; and I am glad to know that, in making this statement, I am addressing one so familiar as you are with the practice of the University in all its departments. Should it be thought for the public advantage that the University shall guarantee the opinions and future purposes, as well as the actual literary and scientific acquirements of its Medical Graduates, let those who so think give the public their reasons, and, if successful, obtain the necessary powers; but by no means let those whose office as examiners confines them to the inquiry as to “studies and acquirements” merely, be permitted to pass over at their own pleasure into the other territory, and to reject, without previous notice given, any candidates whose opinions may differ from their own, or who confess an intention to extend their studies into extra-mural regions of medical investigation.

Thus I come without hesitation to the conclusion, that the matter in question is one on which the non-medical public are quite entitled to express their opinion, and that, in fact, it is their opinion, and not the opinion of the majority of the doctors, which will be decisive; and I would here add, that, inasmuch as the University is a public institution, it would be unjust to exclude from it those who may differ in their views as to the best mode of medical practice, but who desire to avail themselves of the opportunities of instruction which it affords, and in other respects to comply with its rules. The minority of the public who prefer the Homœopathic system, are entitled to have physicians educated at our University, and their attainments attested by graduation, if they are able to pass the usual examinations on all the subjects of study which the University undertakes to teach.

If the convictions of some of the members of the Medical Faculty absolutely prevent them from confining themselves within these prescribed limits, it may be necessary that such medical fanatics should be called upon to resign, or that some reasonable men should be

appointed examiners in their stead. I have no sort of anxiety, however, that effect will ever be given to the threatened resignations.

Having exhibited the true objects of the Petition in contrast with this false accuser's representations of these, and having indicated the grounds on which it seems to me that the public are quite entitled to interfere in the matter, for the protection of students, it remains to inquire what consideration may be due to this Petition; in other words, "Who are the petitioners?" If we take this writer's account, it is "as insignificant, and as devoid of all weight and influence, as their own infinitesimal globules and dilutions." The writer may find this a perilous comparison; for, if these are as successful as this Petition has been, those who employ them may have good reason to be content. This "insignificant" Petition, then, we are told, bears the signatures of "*three thousand three hundred and thirty-seven men*, most of them heads of families." Among these are *nine* Peers; *five* Members of Parliament, one of them being Lord Robert Grosvenor; *one hundred and fourteen* Physicians and Surgeons, *thirty-one* of the former being Graduates of the University over which you preside; *two hundred* Clergymen; *forty-eight* Magistrates, and *seventy-one* Military and Naval Officers. How many Literary men, how many Bankers, Merchants, Manufacturers, Lawyers, Gentlemen, &c., have signed this Petition, we are not informed; but we must infer that they are so many of each of these classes as will correspond in proportion with those enumerated. After adverting to such signatures, one is disposed to ask, How great must this anonymous writer be, who pronounces these petitioners to be "insignificant, and devoid of all weight and influence!" Will he not disclose himself, that we may honour him accordingly? The manner in which he disposes of one or two of these classes is amusing. The peers and clergymen are at once dismissed as notorious abettors of quackery; in fact, the most dupable people on the face of the earth. Of the physicians

and surgeons who sign it, he is prudently silent. He has nothing to say against them individually, and as a body he could only show them to be "insignificant," by showing himself to be more insignificant, in the proportion of one hundred and fourteen to *one*. Nor is any objection taken to the magistrates. He cannot, however, think of making any account of military and naval officers of lower rank than generals, on the one hand, and admirals on the other. These are here named; and with the Peers and members of the House of Commons constitute, he tells us, "the *Dii Majores* among the patrons of Homœopathy in the three kingdoms." Nothing of the sort; in any view, they are only the *Dii Majores* among the subscribers of this Petition, who are indeed but a fraction of the adherents of Homœopathy in the three kingdoms. How many of the most influential of these have not signed it, will be seen by looking over the lists of office-bearers in the London Homœopathic Hospitals; and their reticence on the present occasion seems to me sufficiently accounted for in the Letter to the Lord Provost which accompanied the Petition.

Not attempting a detailed analysis of the whole subscriptions, the writer professes to give "a sketch of those who constitute the great mass of petitioners north of the Tweed. In Edinburgh," he tells us, "560 individuals have signed the Petition. Probably sixty of these, or seventy at the most, belong to the educated classes of the community; the remainder consist of all sorts of handicraftsmen—among whom cabinetmakers, confectioners, and carters; porters, printers, and painters; smiths, spirit-dealers, and shoemakers; bakers and bookbinders; labourers, joiners, grocers, masons, and tailors, are the most conspicuous—accounting, in fact, for at least 240 subscriptions." Well, assuming it to be so, there remain to be accounted for, on the showing of this meritorious, painstaking arithmetician, three hundred and twenty (or, if we deduct his nine policemen, seven sailors, and three soldiers, three hundred and one) subscriptions. This number, then, will approximately represent

the subscriptions of the higher and middle classes; and a goodly number it is. But many of the latter, it is to be observed, are among those already enumerated. By what license of speech he reckons "grocers and spirit-dealers" among "handicraftsmen" I am at a loss to conceive; though I can quite understand that "operating surgeons" might, in a scientific classification, be thus placed.

The contempt with which this aristocratic professor affects to speak of the industrious classes, is not a little amusing. Having disposed of the nobility and clergy, as altogether unworthy of notice, he goes on to insult for the occasion the so-called industrious classes. This reminds me of the wide difference between a candidate and a placeman. When one of our city doctors has come to the conclusion that the public good requires him to be appointed to a vacant chair in the University, then the printers, tailors, grocers, and shoemakers, and such other tradesmen as form at all times a considerable part of the elective body—the Patrons—are highly respectable, worthy of all honour, to be courted personally, and addressed through the press with all manner of civility; to be loaded with testimonials as to the candidate's merits; but, when he has been elected, then their voices, "most sweet" before, become to him but the "common cry of curs." Thenceforth he will only listen to "the educated classes"—"university men." The rest of the community are good for nothing but to be practised upon.

Yet it would be an easy matter to name men in Edinburgh among the very classes whom this arrogant writer thus insults, greatly his superiors in general cultivation (so far as can be judged from this paper), and quite incapable of the offences against good manners of which he must be pronounced guilty! Witness the following example. To relieve the dulness of the article, he has illustrated it with what are called "fac-simile specimens of the signatures." If the engraver's portraitures are as faithless as the writer's, they are little to be depended on; but I will suppose it otherwise. We have

then here represented two signatures—one of a “gentleman,” the other of a “servant.” The first, we are told, “who designates himself *gentleman*, appears to have dined before signing.” The only ground for this insolent remark, and for thus publishing this fac-simile, is, that the signature indicates a tremulous hand. The infirmities of old age or ill health, which probably caused this, may protect the person of this writer from the natural punishment of his unprovoked impertinence, but will not protect his conduct from the reprobation of every man of right feeling. The other fac-simile is adduced to show that one of the signatures to the Petition is that of a “servant” who wields the pen unskilfully. Of what consequence such a circumstance may be, in estimating the value of the petition, I leave you to judge.

Lavish of his impertinence, after particularly designating two distinguished subscribers of the Petition, our writer wastes a sneer upon the “advocates” whose names he finds among the signatures, and whom, with unaccountable stupidity, he supposes to be there giving, gratuitously, a legal opinion on the relative positions of the Patrons, the *Senatus*, and the Faculty of Medicine, in the matter of graduation—a point on which no opinion whatever is expressed in the Petition. Indeed, its promoters seem to have been quite aware of the delicacy of this question; for, while the Petition is addressed to the Patrons “as representing the community, and invested with large powers within the University,”* it is requested that the Patrons “will cause the irregularity complained of to be brought under the immediate notice of the *Senatus* of the University.” I really do not see how they could have adopted a more judicious form of application.

One more specimen of impertinence I must instance. Among the Edinburgh practitioners of the Homœopathic system, who are honoured with our author’s notice, “is an expatriated Pole, who,

* See Letter to the Lord Provost.

with his brother, was educated for four years by the Medical Faculty of Edinburgh, and exempted from all University fees—a small kindness, for which both of them have expressed their great gratitude, in the only way in their power, by signing this gagging Petition.” How shall I characterise the baseness of this reproach? The man who is capable of using it must either be destitute of all the higher human sensibilities, or must have had them for the time overborne and silenced by inveterate and blind hostility. To cast it in a man’s teeth that he is a foreigner, and, because he fought for his country’s liberties, expatriated and impoverished, and thus in circumstances to receive without derogation from his honour favours which would otherwise have been quite unnecessary to him, is an exhibition of meanness of which I trust the writer is now ashamed. Possibly the offence is not that the patriot referred to is a foreigner, but that, being a foreigner, he has been eminently successful in professional life. I don’t know that any other foreigner has thus acquired so important a position in Edinburgh as the gentleman referred to. A gentleman he was born and is, with too much self-respect to think of receiving favours from those whom he believes to bestow them grudgingly, or with dishonourable conditions; and I pledge myself that, if this writer or his informant will communicate his name to the “expatriated Pole,” with the amount of the fees, the loss of which he has so long remembered, he shall receive payment in full, with such acknowledgment as his conduct merits.

Whether among the present Professors in the University there are any in the position of having obtained, through like merit and adverse fortune, the same privilege, I have not the means of knowing. I should be glad to think any of them so honourably distinguished, trusting that with such the sentiments of this writer will find no approval; who seems to think that the receiver of such a benefit forfeits for ever the right of independent judgment on matters relating to the interests of the University or of Medical Science.

That, with such a sense of "the proprieties" as appears throughout this paper, the writer should find it necessary to explain, on other grounds, the absence of Professor Henderson's subscription to such a Petition, will not surprise you.

The last point I have to refer to is rather a curious one. We are told that this Petition weighs four pounds, and measures sixty yards. I confess I should never have thought of such modes of estimating its value; but, as this ingenious writer has proposed them, I shall be glad to avail myself of his suggestion, as it enables me, by a very simple process, to compare this Petition with another document relating to Homœopathy recently before the Patrons of the University. In one respect only it resembled this Petition, inasmuch as it requested the intervention of the Patrons—not, however, to secure, but to repress liberty. It urged them to remove one of the Professors, on account of his public profession of Homœopathy. This modest memorial bore one signature—being that of Mr Syme, Professor of Clinical Surgery, farther "distinguished (to borrow the peculiar phraseology of this writer) as the second conductor of the periodical print," in which this paper occurs. I am not in possession of the original signature to that memorial, and am unable to say whether, according to this writer's rule, it deserved the epithet of "post-prandial." For the same reason, I cannot weigh it with the precise accuracy which is desirable. I find, however, that the name, written in full with the designation, on such paper as contains the signatures to the Petition, weighs three grains, and measures five-eighths of an inch. If we now compare the two documents according to this method, the result we arrive at is, that the signatures to the Petition are to the signature to the memorial as three pounds fifteen ounces (the Petition weighing one ounce) to three grains—that is as 14,980 to 1; or as sixty yards are to five-eighths of an inch. The writer may no doubt object to my equalling the light signature of an expert operator, whose cleverness is supposed to lie in his fingers, with the "heavy-handed autographs," as he terms them, of

masons and quarrymen; and no doubt some fractional allowance must be made on this ground. I have no occasion to make any other estimate of the value of Mr Syme's signature; nor have we this writer's opinion on that point. For anything I know, he may be prepared to say as much good of the Professor of Clinical Surgery, as Sir Dugald Dalgetty's visitor in the castle-dungeon said of the Marquis of Argyll. As to the respective characters of these two documents, the Patrons seem to have taken substantially the same view which I take, or, at least, to have arrived at the result to which it leads.

The prayer of the Memorial was refused with a well-timed rebuke; that of the Petition was granted, by its being transmitted to the *Senatus*.

I cannot better conclude this letter than by directing your attention, and that of the other members of the *Senatus*, to the "end of the matter" in the Council Chamber. Should the *Senatus* be of opinion that these observations of the Lord Provost are calculated to convey to students an erroneous impression, you will no doubt feel in honour bound to see that it be corrected. I believe, however, that his words truly express the sentiments of the *Senatus*. The Lord Provost said—"He had talked to some of the Professors on the subject, and he believed it would not have been possible to have got even a small number to reject any student on account of his Homœopathic tendencies. HE BELIEVED THAT THAT WHICH CAUSED THE COMPLAINT HAD BEEN DONE SOMEWHAT INADVERTENTLY, AND HE WAS SATISFIED THAT EVERY STUDENT, WHATEVER HIS NOTIONS REGARDING HOMŒOPATHY MIGHT BE, WOULD HENCEFORTH FIND NO BARRIER TO HIS OBTAINING DEGREES."

I have the honour to be,

REVEREND SIR,

Your obedient servant,

ASCRIPTOR.

A P P E N D I X.*

EDINBURGH, 75 QUEEN STREET, Jan. 12, 1852.

MY LORD,—The petition which I have the honour of delivering into your Lordship's hands, for presentation to the Town Council, is probably, both in number and weight of names attached to it, without parallel in the records of the city.

It has been signed by *three thousand three hundred and thirty-seven* men, most of them heads of families. Among the most elevated classes have been noted, *nine* PEERS, viz., the Earl of Airlie, the Earl of Wilton, the Earl of Roden, Lord Gray, Lord Kinnaird, Lord Lindsay, Lord Colville of Culross, the Earl of Erne, and the Bishop of Down and Connor; *five* MEMBERS of PARLIAMENT, viz., Lord Robert Grosvenor, Lord Newport, Mr Elliott Loekhart, Mr John Ellis, and the Hon. C. P. Leslie; *one hundred and fourteen* PHYSICIANS and SURGEONS, *thirty-one* of the former Graduates of the University of Edinburgh; *two hundred* CLERGYMEN (one of them being the Rev. Alfred Pope, Leamington, the father of the aggrieved student); *forty-eight* MAGISTRATES; *seventy-one* MILITARY and NAVAL OFFICERS.†

Great as the numbers and important as many of the persons are, they form a mere fraction of those interested in the object. The agency employed to procure signatures to this petition was only occasional and gratuitous, and in many productive quarters no efforts whatever were made. Many friendly to the object refrained

* The following letter is extracted from a volume lately published under the title "Homœopathy in 1851." Edinburgh: J. Hogg.

† Additional names having been sent after the petition was presented, the numbers of the different classes have been increased; but the total number who signed the petition has not been altered, so that this is somewhat short.

from signing; some because they thought the Town Council could do no good in the matter; others—and these the most influential—on the ground that the University having issued its manifesto against all students intending to devote themselves to Homœopathic practice, our strength ought to be directed towards the establishment of a separate institution for their education, or at least of a Board of Examiners, with power to grant degrees in medicine.

Your petitioners assent to neither of these views. On the contrary, it seems to us that the Town Council, as representing the community and invested with large powers within the University, is the legitimate and appointed authority for the redress of any public wrong which may occur there, even should it be of such a nature that they can give redress only indirectly; and we are of opinion that any separate institutions will be premature, until all efforts to secure free use of those now existing have failed. At present the general impression on the minds of the medical profession, the students, and the public is, that our University has declared all who intend to practise according to the principles of Homœopathy inadmissible to graduation. This impression may be erroneous—I believe it is so; but it is yet inevitable, so long as there is no public disavowal of the obvious and just inference from the public statement of the Faculty of Medicine in regard to Mr Pope's examination, *embodied in the petition*. And equally inevitable will be the consequences; the honest and bold students will abandon a school from which they are warned, by hearing from the lips of the examiners that there is a trap between them and their diploma, although not more than one in ten may fall into it; while the timid and less scrupulous will avoid the pitfall by disguising their real sentiments. In either case, the University and the interests of medicine and the public will suffer serious damage.

Representing as we do so considerable and influential a portion of the community, we think ourselves entitled to obtain, in some form, through your honourable body, an explicit assurance as to the

intentions of the University in this matter, and to know whether or not this unprecedented Test Act is to be enforced against any students disposed to study or to practise Homœopathy; and we cannot for a moment entertain the thought that the rulers of the highest educational institution in the kingdom will hide their purposes in ambiguous phraseology.

To you, then, my Lord, and the Town Council, we look for a definite reply. We are prepared for either alternative; and according to the response shall be our future line of conduct.—I have the honour to be, my Lord, your most obedient servant,

J. RUTHERFURD RUSSELL.

To the Right Hon. the Lord Provost.

The following extract from a letter recently received from Dr Trinks of Dresden may be interesting, as indicating the view taken on the Continent of the recent proceedings here :—

“The resolution of the English Universities to require of every candidate in medicine a promise not to study and practise Homœopathy in the future, here excites unusual surprise. We have, indeed, also had persecution to stand; but it never went so far in any German University as to wish to subjugate freedom of study, judgment, and treatment; and even during the twenty years Homœopathy was forbidden in Austria, through the influence of Dr Stift, physician to the Emperor Francis—even then it was held by all the world, friends as well as foes, that this was irrational, and a mockery of all science. Despite of the state prohibition in Austria, Homœopathy grew in Vienna, under the emperor’s eyes, more and more from day to day, and now there are there two state-supported hospitals, and in the University lectures on Homœopathy are given. Kreisig, the most bitter enemy of Hahnemann and Homœopathy, announced, at a full government meeting in 1826, which was very unfriendly to Homœo-

pathy, that Homœopathy must not be put down by power of law; a watchful eye must be kept upon them, because no science must be prohibited. So Kreisig could not venture any step against it, although it would have been easy for him to have got such a prohibition sanctioned.

“In this respect, then, do we occupy a higher position in Germany than in free England. Such a piece of intolerance looks like a pasquinade on the sound understanding of the learned body. This medical corporation has reared itself a *monumentum ære perennius* in history, which no power in the world can ever erase. It is an indelible disgrace that, in the nineteenth century, the free investigation in an experimental science and art is to be degraded by exacting promises which no thoughtful man can keep. This fact belongs to the darkest times of the Middle Ages, and these, God be thanked! are long since over in Germany.

“Send me all the publications which have appeared on the subject in England, for we all take the greatest interest in this occurrence, which really does not redound to the honour of ‘old England.’ ”